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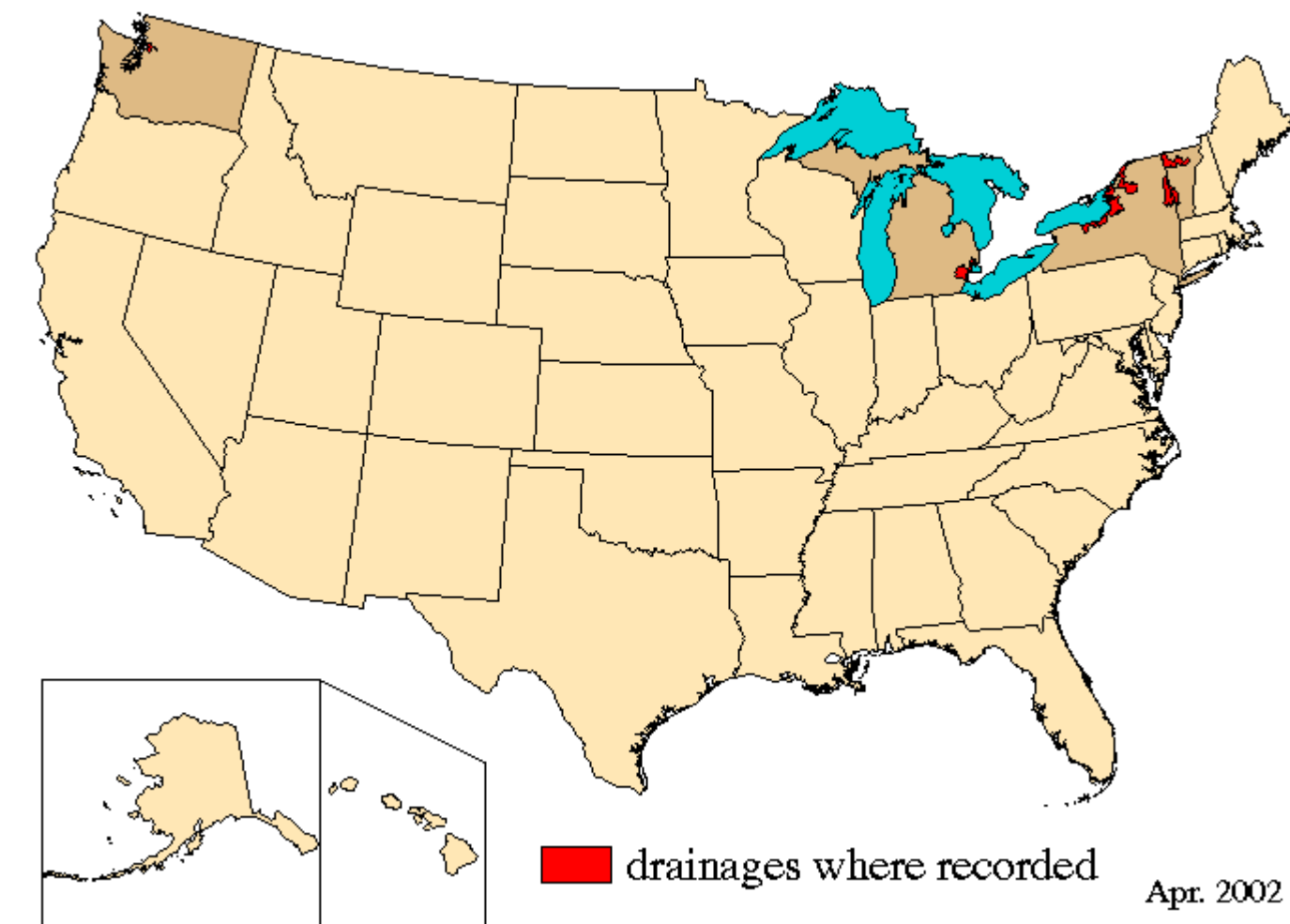
NAS - Nonindigenous Aquatic Species

Hydrocharis morsus-ranae L.

Common Name: European frog-bit

Taxonomy: Division-Magnoliophyta (Angiosperms); Class-Liliopsida (Monocots); Subclass-Alismatidae; Order-Hydrocharitales; Family-Hydrocharitaceae (Frog's Bit Family).

Description: Free-floating aquatic [plant](#) with leathery, heart-shaped leaves; inhabiting quiet edges of rivers and lakes and open marshes.



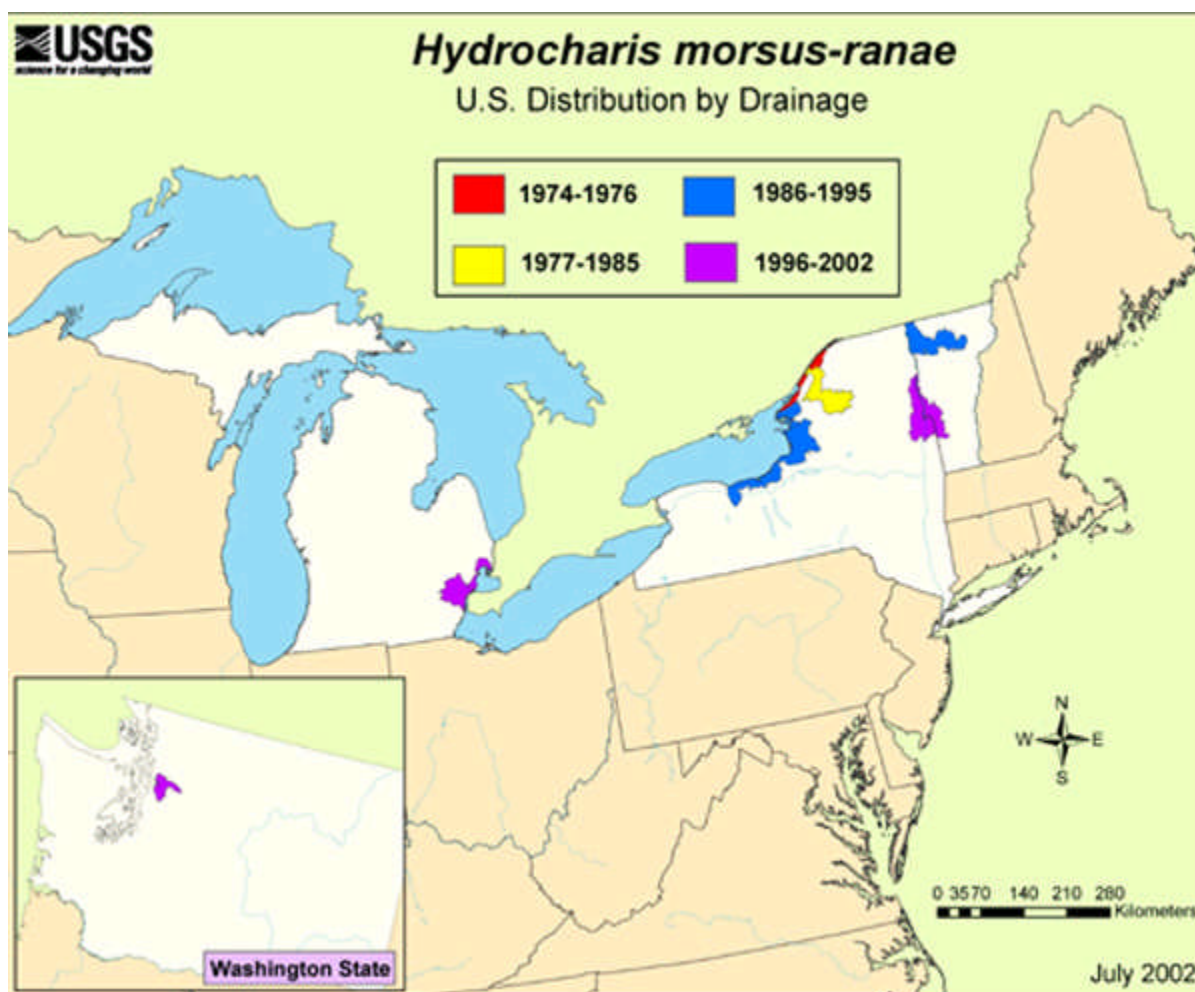
Distribution - United States: Recently found established in **Washington**, Snohomish Co., in the wetlands surrounding Meadow Lake, where natural outflow through the wetlands appears to be restricting spread down the drainage (pers. comm. J. Parsons, WA Dept. of Ecology, 2002).

Identified in 2000 as new to the state of **Michigan** where populations are known from two sites

1) Lake St. Clair marshes and 2) Detroit River marshes. One or two unidentified plants were first observed in a dredged slough at Lake St. Clair in 1996. Within two years plants had become abundant throughout the marsh and formed dense mats in cut ponds. The Detroit River marshes lie downstream of Lake St. Clair. Both localities drain the Detroit River which flows into Lake Erie (J. Daniels 2000; pers. comm. J. Champion, Huron Clinton Metroparks, and A.A. Reznicek, Univ. of Mich., 2001). European frog-bit has been known from the Canadian shoreline of Lake Erie since 1976 (Catling and Dore 1982).

Previously known in **New York**. European frog-bit was first recorded for the United States in the 1974 from the Oswegatchie River, just off the St. Lawrence River, in northern New York. By the early 1980s, occurrence in that state increased to inland sites south of the St. Lawrence River, and by the early 1990s, to bays and marshes along Lake Ontario (Catling and Dore 1982; Invasive Plants of Canada Database 1995). By 2000 it had spread to eastern New York, in the southern reaches of Lake Champlain, at Mill Bay (pers. comm. H. Crosson, Vt. Dept. Env. Cons. 2001).

European frog-bit was first discovered in Lake Champlain during 1993 at its northern reaches, near Grande Isle, **Vermont**. It appeared confined there until 1999 when plants were first found along the southern shore of Lake Champlain at Benson, Orwell and West Haven, Vt. (pers. comm. H. Crosson, Vt. Dept. Env. Cons. 2001).



Method of Introduction: Plant dispersal (aided by motor boats) through aquatic systems; entering from Canada, where in the 1930s it first escaped ornamental cultivation.

Distribution - Canada: Southeastern Ontario and adjacent western Quebec, including the Ottawa, Rideau and St. Lawrence Rivers and the shorelines of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie.

Links to Canada distribution and biological information at [Environment Canada](#) and [National Botanical Services](#).

Link to "[European Frogbit: What is it? Should we be worried?](#)" in Upwellings, Winter 2000, Michigan Sea Grant College Program.

References Cited:

Catling, P.M. and W.G. Dore. 1982. Status and identification of *Hydrocharis morsus-ranae* and *Limnobium spongia* (Hydrocharitaceae) in northeastern North America. *Rhodora* 84(840):523-545.

Daniels, J. 2000. European Frogbit: What is it? Should we be worried? Michigan Sea Grant College Program, Upwellings 22(4).

Invasive Plants of Canada Database. 1995. USA records of *Hydrocharis morsus-ranae* in the Collections of Agriculture and AgriFoods Canada, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, Ontario (DAO). Compiled by Erich Haber, Ph.D., National Botanical Services, Ottawa.

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Revision Date: August 2002

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Page Last Modified: June 02 2005

